

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor Blagojevich Announces Batman Movie “The Dark Knight” Generated Nearly \$40 Million in Revenue for the Illinois Economy**

*“Dark Knight” filmed in Illinois during 2007 is the largest film ever made in Illinois*

CHICAGO – In anticipation of tonight’s Chicago premiere of the new Batman film, The Dark Knight, Governor Blagojevich today announced that The Dark Knight brought nearly \$40 million in revenue to the Illinois economy, making it the largest movie filmed in Illinois on record. The movie, which was filmed in the Chicago area last year, created approximately 4,500 job hires. The movie opens to the public on Friday, July 18.

“The Dark Knight is evidence of the success of the Illinois Film Tax Credit. The Film Tax Credit put Illinois back on the film industry’s map and helped Illinois achieve record revenues of \$155 million and over 26,000 job hires in 2007,” said Governor Blagojevich. “By renewing the tax credit, we have held on to our competitive position and are helping to ensure that filmmakers will continue coming here to make their movies.”

Chicago locations filmed for movie include the Old Post Office (404 West Harrison), Lower Wacker Drive, Hotel 71 (71 East Wacker Drive), the IBM Building (330 North Wabash), Lincoln Park and Navy Pier.

The economic impact of The Dark Knight could be directly felt by Illinois workers who, in total, received over \$17.5 million in wages from jobs such as set construction, electrical work, make-up and hairstyling, truck driving and acting talent. In addition, Illinois vendors received nearly \$22 million in sales from the movie. Local companies from security providers to hardware stores and cleaning companies to catering services benefited from The Dark Knight’s production needs.

“The Dark Knight is evidence of the film industry’s huge economic impact in Illinois. The Dark Knight alone poured nearly \$40 million in revenue into the state and provided employment for over 4,000 people. In addition, this movie production purchased goods and services from over 300 Illinois vendors including hardware, lumber, catering and security,” Illinois Film Office Managing Director Betsy Steinberg said.

The film industry has a sizable impact on the Illinois economy and brings thousands of jobs to the state each year. In 2007, Illinois film productions made more than 26,500 hires in Illinois – a 110 percent increase over 2006. A number of films and television shows were produced in Illinois in 2007 including: “The Dark Knight” (Batman); “Wanted,” starring Angelina Jolie and Morgan Freeman; “Fred Claus,” with Vince Vaughn; “Meet the Browns,” starring Angela Bassett; “The Express,” starring Dennis Quaid; “ER” (TV show), and “My Boys” (TV show). This year, movies such as “Public Enemies” starring Johnny Depp and “The Informant” starring Matt Damon have filmed in Illinois.

In 2000, Illinois began suffering a mass exodus of the film industry as other states began enacting film incentives. By 2003, the Illinois film industry had fallen to an all-time low of \$23 million. In response, Gov. Blagojevich enacted the Illinois Film Tax Credit. Since its passage, the film industry has rebounded dramatically. The film industry reached an all-time record of nearly \$155 million in 2007. This represents the single best year in the state's history – and an 80 percent increase over 2006.

“We are always seeking innovative ways to promote Illinois as a place to do business. Having productions film in the state not only provides an opportunity to showcase all Illinois has to offer, but also brings in much needed revenue and helps provide employment for thousands of people,” Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Jack Lavin said. “If you compare revenues from 2007 to 2003, the year before the FTC was enacted, it is evident the tremendous impact the credit has had on the state economy and for Illinois workers.”

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is dedicated to advancing Illinois’ reputation as a world-class film destination. The Illinois Film Office, a division of DCEO, promotes and markets the state as an ideal shooting location for films, television shows and commercials. The IFO also promotes and encourages the training and hiring of Illinois residents who represent the diversity of the state’s population.

Gov. Blagojevich’s Opportunity Returns regional economic development strategy is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois’ history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn’t work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – each with a regional team that is empowered and expected to rapidly respond to opportunities and challenges. Opportunity Returns is about tangible, specific actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to businesses. It is about upgrading the skills of the local workforce,

increasing the access to capital, opening new markets, improving infrastructure, and creating and retaining jobs. Opportunity Returns is about successfully partnering with companies and communities, both large and small, to help all of Illinois reach its economic potential.